



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Pinedale Field Office
P.O. Box 768
Pinedale, Wyoming 82941-0768



In Reply Refer To:
6500 (LLWYD01000)

January 21, 2010

Dear Operators and Consultants:

Bureau of Land Management Pinedale Field Office is submitting a revised wildlife survey protocol to be implemented and followed during any wildlife survey conducted within the Pinedale Field Office boundary. The updated version of the protocol including associated excel spreadsheets can be found on the BLM Pinedale website http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/field_offices/Pinedale.html.

This protocol is an effort to provide standardization among all who may conduct surveys in our field office, particularly consulting companies. The standardization of the protocol will greatly improve effective use of the information for management decisions and practices and will also increase our baseline data, which improves our knowledge of the wildlife species that use or live within the habitats found in the Pinedale Field Office. Inconsistencies between the previous protocols and BLM provided excel tables and data dictionaries were identified and have been corrected. Efforts were also made to condense protocols where feasible and to reorganize and better explain data standards and survey key and codes in other portions of the protocols. Updates have only been made to the Raptor and Pygmy Rabbit protocols and their associated excel tables and data dictionaries. Future changes may occur to the organization and formatting of the remaining species' protocols in an effort to provide consistency between the protocols for the different species.

The BLM is governed under many laws and regulations, which require wildlife to be considered in all management actions or activities, conducted on the BLM lands, while ensuring conservation of resources (including wildlife). Those authorities further necessitate that monitoring and inventorying of wildlife be used to meet those management decisions and conservation. Those authorities include, but are not limited to: Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976; Endangered Species Act of 1973; Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918; Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940; BLM manual 6500 – Wildlife and Fisheries Management; BLM manual 6600 – Fish, Wildlife, and Special Status Plant Inventory and Monitoring. Furthermore, guidance and regulation for oil and gas operators and BLM are specified in the Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development: The Gold Book, which incorporated the Code of Federal Regulations: 43 CFR Part 3160 Onshore Oil and Gas Operations; Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases; Onshore Oil and Gas Order Number 1, dated March 7, 2007.

In the past, Pinedale BLM did not have written or standardized survey protocols, which resulted in various methods being used by different companies, lack of consistency among the consultants and BLM biologists, and differing interpretations of the data. These various and often conflicting methods of surveying and reporting resulted in lack of repeatability, consistency, and many times conservation measures for wildlife suffered. Furthermore, the differences in data formats greatly increased BLM's workload, because the formats were incompatible.

This survey protocol is adaptable and can be modified or changed by the BLM with time as knowledge of the area and species which inhabit the area increases and/or as survey protocols improve. The protocol is meant to be overarching with respect to data use purposes concerning wildlife management within the Pinedale Field Office (e.g., EIS specifications, mitigation, exceptions, or research). Pinedale BLM can and will refuse, reject, or nullify any part or all parts of surveys, survey procedures, data, or reports that do not follow the protocol outlined in this document and/or as specified by the BLM field manager and/or Pinedale BLM biologist, and/or GIS data steward.

The following section is **common to all species or any** survey conducted within the BLM Pinedale Field Office and provides detailed information concerning data submission requirements. The attached document (CD) outlines the survey protocols- by species.

Pre-survey Requirements

1. Any entity requesting or hiring/sub-contracting a party to do surveys within the BLM Pinedale Field Office will ensure those hired to conduct the survey are supplied a copy of this BLM Pinedale survey protocol in its entirety (i.e., letter plus species specific protocol).
2. Pinedale BLM will specify if surveys are to be conducted for any reason either through monitoring/planning meetings, exception letters, email, or by phone.
3. BLM must be notified by operators/consultants **prior** to conducting surveys for any reason within Pinedale Field Office boundaries and should be notified for areas adjacent or along the Pinedale Field Office boundary.

Data Collection in Field

1. Data collection will follow specific protocol by species, but is subject to change based on new or improved methods, literature, or BLM directives for data collection in the field.
2. Global Positioning Systems (GPS) equipment capability must conform to BLM specifications.
 - a. Authority for this action comes from BLM Instruction Memorandum (IM) No. WY-2003-039 and the attachment "Accuracy Guidelines for GPS Mapping for GIS ver. 1.4." BLM approval of the GPS device is required before data collection begins.
 - b. All horizontal position data will be collected and reported to the Pinedale BLM in NAD 83(2007) Zone 12, Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM).
 - c. The model, make, and year must be recorded in all reports submitted in the paper portion of the report and in the metadata file.
 - d. When BLM survey protocols require the use of GPS mapping technology for wildlife data collection, the GPS unit used must have a post processed differential or real time correction standard capability of no more than 15 meters for all required data collection. This information must be provided in the data tables provided for each species' protocol (spreadsheets available on the web).

3. All required data fields specified in survey protocol for the species being surveyed must be completed regardless of the method of data submissions used (e.g., data dictionary, database, or spreadsheet).
4. Pinedale BLM biologists, data stewards, or others designated by Pinedale BLM may inspect or observe field methods at any time during the survey or may assist in the field work.

Data Entry

1. All data must be submitted in the specified format. A database, spreadsheet, shapefile attribute table, or data dictionary format will be outlined by the BLM in the Survey Protocols document. Example formats will also be supplied by the BLM.
2. Electronic files (including GIS) will contain only data and information specified in the survey protocol. Do not add files or information to species files that are not requested or specified in the protocol.
3. All required fields must be completed as described in survey protocols by species.
4. All measurements will be reported to the 100ths decimal unit (e.g., 5.06), except UTM coordinates, or measurements that are estimated, which will be reported as specified in the Survey Protocols.
5. All measurements taken must conform to the Survey Protocols document and be reported in the appropriate units as described in the document.
6. There will be a file that contains only information for the species surveyed; all incidental observations and data collection will be contained in a separate file labeled as incidental observations.
7. Wording or terminology will contain only those phrases specified in protocol.
 - a. All "unknown" specification will be explained in the comment section.
8. Geographical Information System (GIS) shapefiles will also be separated by data on species surveyed and separate shapefile for incidental observational data.
9. Naming electronic files (including GIS) will follow the standard specified on the example format sheets. For example, project name and species.
10. Labeling the discs and title pages for the paper reports will follow the examples included in the survey protocol. For example, company requesting the survey, date of survey, and species surveyed.
11. Assure that the information contained on the discs conforms to the label on the discs.
12. BLM Pinedale will only accept non-corrupted discs that have all data/information specified in this survey protocol and the submission will not be considered a complete report without said accompanied discs.

Survey Submission to BLM

1. Pinedale BLM will only accept survey reports that are in the format specified (see attachment).
2. Pinedale BLM will accept the reports by FTP download, general postal service mail, or physical delivery.
3. Completed electronic data and completed reports on a project must be submitted no later than 2 weeks after a survey is complete (except raptor data), unless otherwise agreed upon by the BLM. Electronic raptor data (excel/dbase files both of new nests locations and nest activity) must be submitted monthly throughout the nesting season, documenting all the nests checked during that month and the survey results. It is critical that BLM receives this spatial data as soon as possible so that all data collected in the field is used timely and incorporated in all of our projects and evaluations.
4. Completed end-of-year paper reports and electronic data submissions (entire seasons worth of data) for seasonal field monitoring will be submitted no-later-than by the end of the calendar year within the year surveyed or as specified by BLM (e.g., EIS ROD).
5. Reports and discs will only contain information/data collected by that specific company/consultant. Reports and discs will **not** have data collected or documented by other companies or consultants, unless directed to do so by the BLM field manager, biologist, or GIS data steward; report **ONLY** your **OWN** data.
6. Companies or consultants cannot change or modify other companies or consultant's data, information, or reports.

The BLM expects that the issues discussed in this letter and those presented in the Wildlife Survey Protocol Pinedale Field Office Version 2.1, will be submitted in their entirety, any omission of the required information will be sent back to the responsible party for correction.

Thank you for your assistance in this effort for standardization and consistency.

Sincerely,

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Field Manager

Enclosure: